

XXVIII. *Descriptions of Three Species of Indian Micro-Lepidoptera.* By H. T. STAINTON, Esq.

[Read 7th January, 1856.]

THE three insects I propose on the present occasion to describe, were bred last summer at Calcutta, by Mr. Atkinson. As it is something new to get bred specimens of the genera *Coriscium*, *Phyllocnistis* and *Lithocolletis* from the "far East," I hope this is but the beginning of an improved state of affairs.

Unfortunately, I am painfully aware of how very, very little use it is describing a few random species from a distant country; nay, I sometimes doubt whether this proceeding is not actually worse than useless, for the time will come when some one will have to go over these descriptions, to find whether other species from the same locality have previously been described or not; and it is more than probable that it will take him twice the time to make out my descriptions that it has taken me to make them.

It appears to me that each country ought to work out its own Entomology, and that while we amuse ourselves with describing a few American or Indian species, we only cause difficulties for future American or Indian Entomologists. Where, as in Entomology, the number of species is so vast, the description of a few only, from some distant quarter of the globe, unless systematically followed up, is likely to resemble the martello towers in "puzzling posterity."

Yet, doubting much whether I am doing right, I feel that some record of Mr. Atkinson's labours ought to be preserved, and, therefore, I have briefly sketched the following descriptions of the species he has sent me. I may add, that Mr. Atkinson is likely to remain at Calcutta some time, and proposes to continue his Micro-Lepidopterous studies there. The species I have now to describe are *Coriscium orientale*, *Phyllocnistis Citrella*, and *Lithocolletis Bauhiniæ*.

*Coriscium orientale*, n. sp.

Alis anticis griseis, dilute et saturate fusco-variegatis, strigulis tribus abbreviatis costæ apicem versus nigris, duabus albidis alternantibus; ciliis apicis albidis bis saturate fusco-cinctis.

Exp. al.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lin.

This insect is most nearly allied to our *Brongiardellum*, but the long tuft of the 2nd joint of the palpi (which tuft is quite as long as the terminal joint) would sufficiently distinguish it; and the markings on the anterior wings are very obscure and vague, and not bright and distinct as they are in our European species.

Expansion of the wings  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lines.

Head and face pale fuscous; maxillary palpi whitish; labial palpi, second joint, pale fuscous, varied with dark fuscous, with a long projecting tuft of moderate thickness; terminal joint whitish, with two black rings. Antennæ dark fuscous, with paler annulations. Hind legs ochereous; tarsi dark fuscous, annulated with whitish.

Anterior wings grey, irregularly mottled with paler and darker fuscous, with three more conspicuous blackish, oblique short streaks from the costa towards the apex, between which are two slender, oblique pale streaks; the posterior of which speedily assumes a blueish tinge, and is continued across the wing to the anal angle; cilia of the hinder margin whitish, intersected by two dark fuscous lines; cilia of the inner margin pale fuscous. Posterior wings fuscous, with a faint purple tinge, with paler cilia.

Mr. Atkinson sent me two specimens of this insect, with the following note: This is attached to one of the *Bauhinia*, but not *B. purpurea*; I suspect the larva feeds on the flower buds, but I have only seen it in pupa. The cocoon at first sight is very like the mine of some *Lithocolletides*, but on examination it is found to consist of an upper and under layer of fine compact silken web, of a delicate white, spread in an irregular oval patch on the upper surface of the leaf, and, like a *Lithocolletis* mine, slightly contracting it. It appears the beginning of June."

*Phyllocnistis Citrella*, Atkinson in litt.

Alis anticis albis, linea humerali, altera costali pone medium productis, maculam dilute auream includentibus, linea recta transversa fusca pone medium, apice dilute ochreo, puncto apicali atro.

Exp. al.  $2\frac{1}{4}$  lin.

This pretty little insect is nearly allied to our European *Suffusella* and *Saligna*, though so much smaller. It is readily distinguished by the pale ochreous apical portion of the wing, and the straightness of the transverse fuscous line beyond the middle.

Expansion of the wings  $2\frac{1}{4}$  lines.

Head, face and palpi white. Antennæ whitish; basal joint white. Legs white.

Anterior wings white, with two slender grey streaks; one from the shoulder, terminating on the fold beyond the middle, the other beginning on the costa, near the base, and running parallel to it; the latter half of the space, included between these two streaks, is, in certain lights, pale golden. In the middle is a short oblique streak from the costa; beyond the middle is a transverse dark fuscous line, beyond which the apical portion of the wing is almost entirely pale ochreous, but with two short fuscous streaks from the costa, and some fuscous streaks at the anal angle; at the apex is an intense black dot preceded by a few silvery scales, and from it three or four fuscous streaks radiate in the cilia. Posterior wings whitish, with pale grey cilia.

Of this species Mr. Atkinson only sent me two specimens, observing, "it feeds on a species of *Citrus*. The mine and cocoon are very like those of *Phyllocnistis saligna* and *suffusella*. The cocoon is situated at the edge of the leaf, which is rolled up by it, just as the willow and poplar leaves are by those species. I propose to call it *Ph. Citrella*. It appears in February."

*Lithocolletis Bauhiniae*, Atkinson in litt.

Alis anticis brunneo-ochreis, linea tenui basali abbreviata albidâ infra et postice nigrosquamata, fasciis tenuibus duabus angulatis, tertia obliqua albidis, postice nigrosquamatis.

Exp. al.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lin.

This is not closely allied to any of our European species. It has some resemblance to *Trifasciella* and *Scabiosella*, but is at once distinguished by the dark margins of the three fasciæ being on their posterior edges. Another singular instance of a marking diametrically opposite to those which occur in the European species of this genus, is, that the basal streak is dark margined on its dorsal edge.

Expansion of the wings  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lines.

Head dark ochreous, with a ferruginous tinge. Face and palpi whitish. Antennæ whitish, with fuscous annulations. Hind tarsi whitish, broadly annulated with dark fuscous.

Anterior wings brownish-ochreous, with a slender, short, whitish basal streak, margined beneath, and at its end with black. Before the middle is a slender, angulated, whitish fascia, much nearer the base on the inner margin than on the costa; the costal arm of this fascia is very short; beyond the middle is a second

angulated fascia precisely similar; both these are margined with black scales externally, but only on the longer dorsal arm; towards the hinder margin is an oblique whitish fascia, terminating in the apex, externally margined with black, and between it and the second fascia, is a small whitish spot on the costa, which is sometimes connected with the angulation of the second fascia by a series of black scales; cilia greyish, with a dark fuscous hinder marginal line.

Posterior wings grey, with paler cilia.

Of this I have received several specimens from Mr. Atkinson, who remarks, "I detected this shortly after my arrival here, mining the upper cuticle of the leaves of *Bauhinia purpurea* (not *racemosa*, as formerly mentioned,\*) in irregular circular or oval patches, the leaf remaining uncontracted. Before changing to pupa, the larva spins a slight silken cocoon, drawing together the two cuticles of the leaf in the centre of the mined part, and forming almost an exact circle."

\* Proceedings Ent. Soc. vol. iii. N. S. p. 93.